THE LIVING EMBLEM: SPECTACLE IN VOLPONE

by

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This paper demonstrates that almost every scene in Volpone is organized around a "magnetic center." The magnetic center is a person or object towards which characters regularly move or consistently direct their attention. The magnetic center device not only provides a structure for Jonson's spectacle, but also tends to emblemize the scenes by formalizing them.

Scenes dominated by strong magnetic centers utilize conventions of still pictures derived through the tradition of emblems and tableaux vivants. Jonson makes stage pictures with double meaning, dramatic and symbolic, and creates significant combinations of word and image much like emblems.

The contribution of spectacle to Jonson's meaning in Volpone is studied through analysis of all the major scenes and many minor ones. Some subsidiary topics covered are: 1) clothing and disguise as representative of ostentation, vanity, and conceit; 2) pictorialization of the fox fable; 3) ironic uses of ceremony, pageantry, and formal patterns of movement; and 4) occurence of conventional and traditional pictorial symbols.

CONTENTS

I. Introduction: The Magnetic Center

Ben Jonson's best plays have been praised by many critics for their characteristic solidity and orderliness of dramatic construction. Dryden's praise of him for "the copiousness and well-knitting of the intrigues"[1] has withstood the test of time. Dryden, a conscientious playwright himself, understood that Jonson's plays were "well-knit" both for performance presentation and as stories, "well-knit" from the viewpoint of the actors who had to perform them as well as from the viewpoint of the audience who only had to apprehend and enjoy them.

Most critics and scholars have studied the plays as literary compositions, concentrating primarily on those dramatic aspects most easily preserved by the printed word: character, plot, language, and theme. Jonson intended that his plays should be regarded as literary compositions. He referred to them as "dramatick poetrie."[2] His careful editing of his texts and unconventional issuance of his folio Workes leave no doubt of his desire to elevate the products of his pen above the status of ephemeral performances and to leave behind a body of literature to be judged by literate men.

At the same time, Jonson's plays were designed as stage spectacles. While he wrote for posterity, he also wrote for his immediate audience. Robert E. Knoll is one of the few scholars to pay much attention to the theatrical side of Jonson's plays, putting forth the proposition that in the

plays "as in the masques Jonson makes an appeal to the eye of his audience, and if we fail to visualize the scenes and the movements on stage, we miss half thefun and two-thirds of Jonson's dramatic genius."[3] But little has been written about Jonson's plays as fully theatrical events, as visual and aural art.

It is just as striking how solidly Jonson constructs scenes as stage events as it is how cohesively he sets down the unified text. William A. Armstrong explains that Jonson does not strive for spectacular display, but for effective presentation: "the stagecraft of Jonson's plays is distinguished by its clarity, economy, and discrimination, and many of his finest effects are obtained by the simplest of means."[4]

The man who wrote masques for the court of James I and designed tableaux vivants for royal progresses did not segregate his talents between the different forms in which he wrote. Harry Levin has discerned that certain patterns of visual organization and certain principles of stagecraft are shared by all of Jonson's entertainments:

> Structurally, the relation between Jonson's masques and comedies is close. . . . Jonson's comedies, from first to last, have a tendency to crystallize, whenever opportunity offers, into a series of games, ceremonies, shows, songs, litanies, orations, and every sort of masque-like invention . . . these episodes, besides fulfilling their dramatic function in the plays to which they belong, are independently reducible to formal pattern.[5]

Despite the independent perfection of many particular scenes, Jonson firmly maintains subordination of parts to

the whole play. The order discernible in the briefest "masque-like invention" likewise manifests itself in the whole. It is as if a series of finely cut jewels have been arranged in an exquisite setting. Freda L. Townsend admires Jonson's scrupulous consistency:

> . . . variety does not mean forfeiture of order. . . The careful hand of the craftsman weaves together his many actions; characters appear and disappear according to a large plan which holds them all in order. Artistry is everywhere apparent--in execution of detail, in richness of effect, and above all, in the close, serried, and subtle unity.[6]

Wallace A. Bacon has studied how Jonson reconciles variety and order. He concludes that Jonson's best plays are regulated by what he calls a "magnetic center." Neither literature nor the theatre possess a vocabulary to explain this concept without resorting, as Bacon does, to analogy:

> For Jonson, structure <u>is</u> something like a "Center attractive" (I should prefer "magnetic") drawing unto it a diversity of characters and humors. The magnetic center determines the pattern--the structure--of elements, as a magnet will arrange iron filings in a clearly observable pattern about it.[7]

Bacon is interested in how the magnetic center regulates all the dramatic elements and unifies the whole play. In operating as the hub of thedramatic action, it naturally follows that the magnetic center serves as the visual center of many scenes. Thus the magnetic center unites the visual organization of scene design with the progress of the plot and with the theme of the play.

In Bacon's sense, the magnetic center radiates meaning through a play. But considered merely as a method of organizing the physical elements of particular scenes, the magnetic center can be more simply defined. Characteristically, Jonson's magnetic center is a person or object characters regularly move toward or away from, or a person or object towards which characters consistently direct their attention. The term "magnetic center" will be used in this paper in this more limited sense.

The magnetic center is not necessarily the same as a central focus of attention, although it may serve that purpose, too. The audience's attention may shift all around the magnetic center, while the magnetic center itself, around which all the scenic elements are arranged, is not made to attract notice.

In his study <u>From Art To Theatre</u>, George R. Kernodle traces the evolution of the basic methods of scenic organization from the static visual arts of painting and sculpture to the kinetic visual art of the theatre. The magnetic center is a development of what Kernodle calls "the center accent," which he defines as "A central scenic element as a nucleus."[8] According to Kernodle, the center accent is one of the oldest and most common means of organizing a pictorial space. Apparently, Jonson reconciles the center accent with motion by endowing it with attractive power, producing the magnetic center.

The magnetic center of the whole play, for example a central personage such as Volpone, also serves as the magnetic

center of many particular scenes. But in terms of visual organization, many other scenes manifest the same structure with some other element occupying the central position. The magnetic center of a particular scene, then, may not be the magnetic center of the play taken as a whole; and in Volpone even a minor scene usually has a magnetic center of some sort.

In V.iv., for instance, Peregrine arranges to frighten Sir Politic Would-Be by pretending that the Mercatori want to seize Sir Politic as a spy. When the Mercatori, who are in on the joke, arrive at the door, Sir Politic hides in a tortoise shell. The tortoise shell, like Volpone's bed in Acts I and III or the mountebank's platform and Celia's window in Act II, serves as the framing structure, the "center pavilion" which Kernodle finds often occupies the "center accent" of medieval and Renaissance scenes and pictures.

Comic incongruity makes the tortoise shell the obvious center of attention even while Sir Politic cowers silently inside and Peregrine and the Mercatori do all the talking. The Mercatori converge on the shell, pretending that they do not know Sir Politic is inside and that they are attracted by zoological curiosity. They hover around the tortoise, striking it on the back and prodding it to see if it is alive and will move. Finally they pull off theshell and discover Sir Politic.

Even this dramatically insignificant scene demonstrates the technical usefulness of the magnetic center and the tectonic and visual strength it lends a scene. The magnetic center can be

a unifying point at which diverse elements meet, a central sun which orders a scene like a miniature cosmos, a generator of attractive and repulsive forces which control the stage movements of characters drawn into its orbit, or a focal point for the attention of the audience.

Jonson is not the only playwright to use the technique of the magnetic center. He uses it, however, much more than anyone else. This paper will show that in Volpone virtually every scene, except for a few transitional ones, is organized about a magnetic center; that there is, generally, only one such center in each scene; and finally that the magnetic center is not merely a device of practical stagecraft, but has thematic significance important for a full understanding of the play. The relevance of the magnetic center to the interpretation of the play's meaning will be explored in the context of the forms Jonson uses in creating theatrical spectacle.

II. The Living Emblem

One reason for Volpone's tenacious reputation and frequent revival is that it is one of the most brilliant visual exhibits among all Jonson's plays. Something in the reader responds to Volpone's vivid theatricality even when it must be transplanted from page to stage by unaided imagination. Una Ellis-Fermor observes: "it is the splendour of the play that haunts us."[9]

George R. Kernodle proves in From Art To Theatre that live dramatic performance draws on traditions and conventions established by the static visual arts. The tableau vivant was one medium through which modes of organizing space and scenic elements passed from the artist's studio to the public stage. The tableaux vivants often "reproduced the traditional emblematic scenic devices handed down in art" (Kernodle, p. 72), and Jonson, himself one of the best designers of tableaux vivants, brings emblematic habits to his plays.

In the course of the action, Jonson will often strike a tableau for momentary visual effect. Motion is suspended to create what is essentially a still picture, though it is usually a speaking picture. Many playwrights use this technique, but Jonson uses it for a special purpose. He reserves the tableau primarily for moments of special symbolic importance. The more symbolic and the less dramatic a scene in Jonson, the more static it will be, and he draws attention to his symbols by adapting the forms of the two symbolic media most familiar to his audience: the still picture and the ritual.

In the opening scene of Volpone, for instance, Volpone worships his gold in a long quasi-religious speech. He lifts a gold coin to his lips and kisses it ceremoniously. For Volpone, wealth has usurped the place of God, and Jonson gives symbolic expression to this fact by making Volpone behave as if the gold coin were a sacred relic. But Jonson does not create this symbolism by his association of gold and religion; he merely makes use of a symbol already long in existence. George Ferguson informs us that in Christian art, "the precious metal, gold, is used as the symbol of pure light, the heavenly element in which God lives. It is also used as a symbol of worldly wealth and idolatry."[10]

Jonson, then, has evoked the dual symbolism of gold. In doing so, he adapts the familiar movements of the priest. But he also adopts the form of the still picture, the emblematic picture in which dual symbolisms are expected and which is accompanied by words. The scene is essentially static, the movements slow. Volpone's stream of words directed to his gold is interrupted by his putting the gold to his lips to kiss, and at that moment the focus of attention on the gold coin is about as absolute as any prop can sustain.

Sometimes Jonson sets in motion and adapts to the stage an actual emblem. An example is Volpone V.iv., in which Sir Politic Would-Be, tyro in statecraft, hides under a tortoise

shell. According to Wilson's Three Lords and Three Ladies of London (1590), the tortoise shell is an emblem for Polity because the tortoise "is safe within, and wheresoever she goes she bears it on her back, needing neither other succour or shelter, but her shell. The word underneath her is Providens securus, the provident is safe. . . ."[11]

Beast fables were one of the most popular topics in the emblem books. Geffry Whitney's A Choice Of Emblemes (1586) discloses an animal of some species almost at every flip of the page, including several foxes. Volpone is not based on any extant emblem, but it does make "explicit allusions to a particular story. . . . The central dramatic situation of the play is lifted from the legend of 'The Fox Who Feigned Death'" (Knoll, p. 83). This story lends itself to the same kind of emblematic pictorialization so common in Whitney's book. In form it is not much different from the emblem of Fraus meretur fraudem, "The Lion oulde that could not get his praye," or Ars deluditur arte, "The sickly foxe, within her hole was hid," or several others in which the key issue is who will be eaten by whom. D. A. Scheve translates the fox story from Conrad Gesner's Historia Animalium (1557), which was in Jonson's library:

> Sometimes in a period of famine she lies on her back deceitfully simulating death. . . . the fox before she thus lies on her back rolls about in red clay and dirties herself so that she appears wounded and stained with blood. When ravens, crows, and other birds that are particularly ravenous see her lying thus, rejoicing as it were over a dead enemy, they fly near and are seized, at least one of them.[12]

The parallel with the story of Volpone is obvious. Volpone, the fox, lies in his bed as if in the throes of a fatal illness. Voltore, Corvino, and Corbacchio, vulture, raven, and crow, visit with gifts, pretending to be Volpone's friends but in fact grasping for the spoils of Volpone's fortune. Their greed puts them in Volpone's power. He divests them of their expensive presents and with the help of Mosca gains other ends of his own, such as tricking Corbacchio into disinheriting his own son Bonario in Volpone's favor and luring Corvino's wife, Celia, into his bedchamber.

Scheve asserts that Jonson used the fox-feigning-death device to emblemize or allegorize the deception of the legacy-hunters (Scheve, p. 242). The emblematic association is not restricted to the names of the characters, the parallel circumstances, and occasional allusions. Jonson probably intended to make the parallel visual, creating a picture of the fox fable. Knoll has described how costuming can enhance the impression of animality:

> One feels confident that Burbage and Condel and Lowin and Heminge, who first acted the play, dressed to emphasize the animal characteristics of the characters. Voltore might well have worn a great black cloak with a long sword forcing its hem to rise like tail feathers, yellow stockings like a vulture's bare legs, and some kind of white headpiece recalling the cormorant's naked head and neck. Volpone himself no doubt wore a russet cloak and a peaked hat low over his forehead suggesting the snout of a fox. The commedia dell'arte (to which there are allusions in the play) was full of such costumes (Knoll, p. 99).

Moreover, John J. Enck explains that by gait, posture, and gesture the actors could make themselves seem sub-human:

> The profuse indications in the dialogue that none of the characters walks like a man make the intention sharper than inserted stage directions could. They prance, skip, creep, or slither, more closely resembling beasts or maimed men than any upright human beings.[13]

Jonson thus supplies a theatrical, satiric double-vision, beast-fable superimposed on Venetian environment. He creates a kind of living emblem which signals the critical intelligence of the observer to look for a deeper meaning than what lies on the surface. This is not to say that Jonson has set before us an overt emblem which works the same way as Whitney's or Quarles' emblems do. Interestingly, beast fable emblems are based generally on the conceit that animals act like men; Jonson reverses the convention and makes men act like animals. In Part of the King's Entertainment In Passing To His Coronation, Jonson rejects simplistic emblem-making even in his tableaux vivants, where he might be expected to use a less complex technique than in his plays: ". . .the Symboles used, are not, neither ought to be, simply Hieroglyphickes, Emblemes, or Impreses, but a mixed character, partaking somewhat of all. . . ."[14]

Jonson, then, uses the visual aspect of the play not in a fixed, but rather in a suggestive way. However, in presenting his series of stage pictures to the audience, Jonson clearly makes use of pictorial conventions and image-making habits derived from ways of looking at things no longer associated with the stage and not a part of the modern sensibility.

III. Act One: The Microcosm

The magnetic center is not unique to the plays of Ben Jonson. Isolated examples of it can be found by the hundreds in the plays of both Jonson's contemporaries and our own. The principle of the magnetic center can be seen at work not only in the drama, but also in many social and ecclesiastical ceremonies. Ultimately, the technique of the magnetic center derives its sanction from the operation of attractive and repulsive forces in nature and in ordinary human affairs.

Jonson's use of the magnetic center is remarkable for his consistency in making it the basis of his scene construction, so that instead of remaining an occasional technique as it does with other playwrights, the principle of the magnetic center almost acquires for Jonson the force of dramatic law. Almost every scene in Volpone is built around either a magnetic center or the simpler, but related, "center accent." Movements are so deliberately arranged about static centerpieces that much of the play gives the impression of being choreographed. At the same time, Jonson employs magnetic centers in such a variety of ways that the method becomes neither obtrusive nor monotonous.

The first act of Volpone, which is a single continuous scene in the modern sense of the word, will serve to illustrate. Volpone's opening speech focuses attention on the central object of the play, his gold. The gold is the magnet

which will draw Voltore, Corbacchio, and Corvino to Volpone's house. Gold is the object of universal desire. Albert B. Kernan finds Volpone's first action in the play his most important:

> The crucial action of Volpone occurs in the first twenty-seven lines of the play, Volpone's celebration of his gold. He first elevates--as the host is raised in the mass--a round gold coin, and the shining yellow piece of metal, the "son of Sol," in that instant replaces the sun which has for ages past brought life to the "teeming earth" . . . Gold is the new center of the Volpone universe, the unmoved mover, the still point, around which all existence now circles and from which it must draw its life.[15]

Gold, the substance which remains a central thematic idea throughout the play, is for the opening moments given physical prominence on the stage. Both Volpone and Mosca turn toward it, Volpone to address it in terms of religious adoration and Mosca to "Open the shrine." The gold occupies a central position onstage: at the Globe, where Volpone was first performed, it would probably be concealed beforehand in the discovery-space behind curtains or possibly vault-like doors especially fitted for the occasion.

The scene suggests a religious ceremony in keeping with Volpone's worshipful speech to the gold. The exposure of the gold to daylight is an entrance into an inner sanctum. Volpone seems to play the part of priest to the false god of materialism; Mosca, that of acolyte. The gold is not associated with religion merely for purposes of ironic contrast; it is the symbol of man's sacrilegious desire to transcend mortal limits. Volpone addresses the gold in such expansive terms because he

attributes to it infinite creative power. Wealth is, above all, an unlimited multiplier of itself, since it draws additional "plate, coin, and jewels" from those hoping to be named Volpone's heirs; and Volpone delights most not in the possession of his wealth, nor in its use, but in the almost magical, nearly effortless process of its unlimited growth. The means are more fascinating to him than the ends. He is, in a sense, a pure devotee of his god, above the common, venal greed of his dupes. His fortune is, rather, the continuing proof of his own god-like genius.

The power of the gold, then, works through Volpone. He has harnessed its supreme force and made himself its mortal agent. Volpone is "magnetized," as it were, by his gold, and becomes the physical magnetic center of all the action for the rest of the first act. Everyone comes to him and departs from him; he alone remains onstage throughout the act.

Before he takes his stationary position in his bed where he will remain for several scenes, however, he is first entertained by the grotesque mock-masque written by Mosca and presented by Nano, Androgyno, and Castrone, Volpone's dwarf, hermaphrodite fool, and eunuch. Once more Jonson gives stage-center to an action not strictly dramatic, but instead ceremonial and purely theatrical, a spectacle of costume, oddity, declamation, gesture, and song. The content of the masque, which traces the progress of the soul of Pythagoras from its Apollonian origin to the body of

Androgyno, may seem absurd and unrelated to the body of the play; yet the mock-masque's theme of transmigration establishes the association between beasts and men so important to the symbolism of the play:

> Kings, Knights, and Beggers, Knaves, Lords and Fooles gat it,
> Besides, oxe, and asse, cammell, mule, goat, and brock,
> In all which it hath spoke, as in the Coblers cock.
> (I.ii.23-24)

Moreover, the dwarf, eunuch, and fool form an emblem of sexually related deformity: the fool is androgynous, the eunuch is castrated, and the dwarf is the product of a deformed birth. The descent of the soul parallels the degeneration of the body, and so in combination the text of the mock-masque and its visual counterpoint illustrate the perversion of the forces of life, the pollution of the springs of vitality. Volpone's illicit lust is a major motive force of the play, and that lust must be regarded as the moral counterpart of physical deformity.

Volpone dons his fox-robes and occupies his huge bed, which "with its movable curtains and acting space on which he plays out his sickness is also a small stage" (Kernan, p. 10). His immobility and central location throughout the rest of the act visually reinforces his dramatic position as center of the plot. Here he is most concretely the magnetic center. Robert E. Knoll notes that the "great plays are centripetal. . . . In Volpone the old fox is the center on whom all the various lines of action converge."[16]

In Act I, Volpone is visibly the constant quantity in a basic situation repeated with three different characters as Mosca successively leads in Voltore, Corbacchio, and Corvino. According to Knoll, the three repeated knocks on the door and the three entrances of the would-be heirs to Volpone's fortune bringing him gifts to purchase his affection in the belief that he is about to die, follow from one of Jonson's most fundamental techniques: "Jonson's dramatic technique is obvious: it is duplication. As in fairy stories and nursery tales, a single kind of dramatic conflict is reiterated with variable characters" (Knoll, p. 120). These scenes resemble a nursery tale with good reason: they are based on an animal fable.

But the animal associations are not the only device used to undermine the human identity and dignity of the three dupes. Repetition serves the same end. Voltore, Corbacchio, and Corvino each believes himself in a unique and privileged position as Volpone's heir-designate through the influence and secret connivance of Mosca, unaware that the wily servant is acting the part of a double-agent. But because each of the three follows the same motions and fills the same basic position in their shared situation, they are all visibly the same to the audience. They are morally equal, and because they all follow the same pattern, they are visibly unfree. Their behavior is an instance of the encrustation of the living by the mechanical which Henri Bergson found the essence

of comedy.[17] Moreover, the presence of an order centered on Volpone supports the idea that he is in command of the situation and that Mosca is managing affairs according to plan. Thus, the design discernible in the simple, repetitious movements of the characters is not mere stage artifice or convenience, but is dramatically functional.

While the action is repetitious, it is also progressive. Voltore brings a large piece of antique plate and seeks Mosca's assurance that none other than Voltore will be Volpone's heir. Corbacchio brings a bag of chequins, smaller but more valuable than the plate, and gloats over the signs of Volpone's apparent physical deterioration. Mosca persuades Corbacchio to disinherit his own son Bonario in favor of Volpone to insure that Volpone will reciprocate by designating Corbacchio his heir. Corvino brings a pearl and a diamond, still smaller and more valuable than the other gifts, and wavers over Mosca's tempting offer to stifle Volpone with a pillow. With each legacy hunter the situation becomes more extreme and Mosca's manipulations more ingenious and playful.

The method Jonson uses to achieve "unity and variety" in Act I may now be clearer. The singularity of circumstance leaves the attention free to focus on the comic variation of character and the comic implications of the situation exposed by the dialogue. Volpone, the prominent center and fixed quantity against which each legacy hunter is measured in terms of how far he is willing to go, generates the pattern.

But paradoxically, Volpone's passivity allows each of the three dupes his turn in the spotlight. And, while the inner design of the plan of movement for the act displays an almost mathematical or mechanical regularity, Harry Levin for one finds it unobtrusive and seemingly natural:

> The difficulty of introducing his characters in a natural sequence of encounters was met by Jonson with a great deal of ingenuity. The plan of Volpone, turned to account again in The Alchemist, enables them to make their entrances one after another, without monotony or stiffness.[18]

A review of the movement pattern in the first act strikes us with admiration for its economy and simplicity. It is rare that a printed text makes the outline of the intended blocking so clear. The plan of Act I is most effective, giving a sense of pattern and order. The stage thus becomes a true microcosm, implying the existence of that greater Order against which human actions must be judged, the Pythagorean "one, two, three, four" dismissed so flippantly by Androgyno. The artificial and man-made microcosm of Volpone's bedroom, a creation of deceit, displays a false order based on manipulation and centered on the false god of gold.

IV. Act Two: Scoto And The Window

While Volpone changes his costume to appear as the mountebank Scoto of Mantua, the stage is occupied by Sir Politic Would-Be and Peregrine. In this play which has been called almost too serious for comedy, Sir Politic is comic relief and Peregrine is his straight man. The casual, easy atmosphere of the scene sets up the audience psychologically for "Scoto's" electrifying and spectacular entrance.

Continuity is maintained by making Sir Politic and Peregrine spectators of "Scoto" and commentators on him. Although on the periphery, they help center attention on Volpone; their commentary on the Scoto tableau is reminiscent of the presenter in a pageant. Sir Politic calls attention to the formal, ceremonious quality of the way "Scoto" mounts the platform:

> Marke but his gesture: I doe vse to obserue
> The state he keeps, in getting up! (II.ii.31-32)
> . . . .
> Note but his bearing, and contempt of these. (II.ii.58)

Clearly, Volpone's bearing is one of pride and authority, the outward facade of nobility.

Volpone's entrance as Scoto is one of the most overtly spectacular moments in the play, underscoring the importance of the scene it introduces. Volpone's sighting of Celia is the incentive moment or generating circumstance of the play's plot. Act I is mechanical; deception meshes perfectly with delusion, producing no real conflict. It is not until Volpone sees Celia that there is an obstacle between Volpone and something he wants and an interplay between what Volpone wants and what the legacy-hunters want.

Anticipation has been sharpened by the remarks of Sir Politic and Peregrine as Mosca and Nano erect a platform. The platform is placed directly beneath Celia's window so that Volpone can catch Celia's handkerchief when she drops it later in the scene. The platform and the window form, in effect, a single visual unit reminiscent of the structures often placed in the centers of medieval paintings.

When all is ready, Volpone enters in his lavish mountebank disguise, with his "copper rings," "saffron jewell, with the toade-stone in't," "imbroidred sute, with the cope-stitch,/ Made of a herse-cloth," and "old tilt-feather" (II.v.11-14). Behind him follows the mob, probably staged in accordance with the Elizabethan practice of bringing on as many people as possible. Large numbers are in and of themselves spectacular. But the purpose of this spectacle is to amplify Volpone's importance. He occupies a dominant, central position above the crowd, a sea of energy, and firmly commands its attention.

The climax of the scene depends on a further visual spectacle: the appearance of Celia at her window over Volpone's head and the dropping of her handkerchief (no doubt brightly colored). The purpose of Volpone's masquerade is to attract Celia to her window so that he may see her. Thus the structural motif of

the first act is repeated: Volpone, disguised and stationary on a raised platform, acts as a center of attention towards whom other characters move.

However, there are important differences between the two scenes which reveal the flexibility, potential, and dynamism of the magnetic center. Act I mainly uses Volpone as a passive center, pretending helplessness in bed. His passiveness lets the attention of the audience focus on each of the legacy hunters in turn. In the mountebank scene of Act II, Volpone is an active center, using all his wit and energy; the audience's attention is firmly focused on him. This spectacle is in the service of language, for it is the power of speech enthroned at the center of the scene. The audience in the theatre merges with the audience on stage: the ordinary dualism of interplay between characters is reduced to a minimum, leaving the singularity of the orator.

Magnificent as Volpone's oration is, it does nothing to advance the story. The hypnotic, persuasive speech is the necessary completion of the mountebank disguise: it is, in a way, a part of the picture, just as an emblem is incomplete without both picture and words. Even Nano, dressed as a zany and singing snake-oil songs, is an extension of Volpone's disguise.

Why does Volpone chose the particular disguise of a mountebank? Where a direct dramatic connection cannot be found, a symbolic one may be.

Scoto is not Volpone's first disguise; he has already disguised himself as a dying man in Act I, applying make-up and costuming himself for the role in full view of the audience, letting them know that he is a master of false identities who can emerge in any shape he pleases. In fact, he never appears to the world outside his own inner circle without some disguise until he is exposed at the end of the play.

Such variation of costume naturally adds to the visual interest of the play. Volpone, the character upon whom the whole play pivots, undergoes colorful transformations. Each disguise, furthermore, has its particular purpose in the plot. Beyond that, the disguises are a means of revealing Volpone's character symbolically.

The fox, of course, is cunning, and Volpone's disguises are visible proof of his cunning and deceit. They are the outward picture of his inner nature, riven with falsity. The fox, furthermore, is in Christian art a symbol of the Devil, the Great Deceiver, and the Devil can change his shape at will, appearing to men in apparently innocent forms.[19] The mountebank disguise, then, is especially appropriate both because such charlatans, as imposture personified, notoriously make their living by deception and because magicians are associated with heresy and the Devil.

Volpone in his charlatan costume holding aloft his vial of oil creates another picture of the false priest offering a false sacrament, similar to his opening orison to gold. Once

more he usurps the claims of heaven, this time by offering miraculous cures. Once more he demonstrates his ability to attract money by playing on the dreams of men. However, lust, not greed, is his motivation; he means to attract not money, but Celia. This scene neatly creates a transition from the theme of desire for gain to the theme of fleshly desires, both symptomatic of Volpone's spiritual malaise and over-reaching ambition.

The completion of the picture, then, requires the appearance of woman like a goddess literally above Volpone, the one object elevated beyond his reach, an object of worship for which he is even apostate from his god of gold. When Celia drops her handkerchief, it is like a sign of grace from above which transforms Volpone, but grace which he devilishly perverts. Behind Celia's action and her station above Volpone lies the entire tradition of Chivalry and the elevation of woman to an ideal; and that ideal is brought into sharp and ironic contrast with Volpone's base ends. Volpone offers up another sacrament, the paper of magic powder, to his new false deity to complete the emblem.

If Volpone has performed his charade to attract Celia to her window, he has also been attracted to her window to see her. The magnetism in this case has a double action, and the window is its interface. The window never dominates a scene, but it is the physical artifact which binds together Act II as a whole.

The window is the central object of conflict between Corvino and Celia; it objectifies Corvino's jealous desire to mew up Celia from all contact with the outside world. After Corvino beats away Volpone, he scolds Celia for exposing herself to public view and declares that henceforth she is not to approach the window. He hoards Celia like a miser, and Celia is equated with gold. The window is like the shrine of gold where Volpone has worshipped.

V. Act Three: The Fox In His Lair

The simplest means of focusing the attention of the audience on a single point is to put one actor on stage alone. Mosca's soliloquy at the beginning of Act III and Volpone's at the beginning of Act V use that focus for a visual purpose, because in each case the character's speech refers to his own body as its main subject.

Mosca's speech demands gestures and movements expressive of its intent and illustrative of its content. The gist of the speech is self-praise, an infatuation with his own wit which bubbles over into physical playfulness so that Mosca practically jumps for joy:

> Successe hath made me wanton. I could skip
> Out of my skin, now, like a subtill snake,
> I am so limber. (III.i.5-7)

Physical description of himself gives way to physical comparison with inferiors whose actions Mosca doubtless mimics as he describes them:

> With their court-dog-tricks, that can fawne, and fleere,
> Make their revenue out of legs, and faces,
> Eccho my-Lord, and lick away a moath. . . (III.i.20-22)

Finally, in a physical metaphor he exaggerates his capability as a con artist:

> . . .your fine, elegant rascall, that can rise,
> And stoope (almost together) like an arrow;

> Shoot through the aire, as nimbly as a starre;
> Turne short, as doth a swallow; and be here,
> And there, and here, and yonder, all at once;
> Present to any humour, all occasion;
> And change a visor, swifter, then a thought! (III.i.23-29)

Mosca concludes by proclaiming the ground of his self-love, that his superior agility is the expression of an inborn, superior vitality of spirit:

> This is the creature, had the art borne with him;
> Toiles not to learne it, but doth practise it
> Out of most excellent nature. . . (III.i.30-32)

The whole speech summarizes Mosca's role in the play. Mosca is the most physically active character. He buzzes about the relatively static person of Volpone, as peripatetic as the literal motion of a fly. His appearance alone on the stage at this point is a way of admiring himself as if in a mirror, but it is the audience who beholds the image. Mosca's body becomes a kind of cipher of his identity, a crooked "I." He serves as the emblem of his own utterance.

After Mosca meets Bonario, the play returns to Volpone's bedroom, the setting which will fill the rest of Act III. Once more the dwarf, eunuch, and fool caper, and once more Volpone takes to his bed, re-establishing the situation of Act I. Although Jonson does not adhere in this play to unity of place, the rear-stage bedroom setting serves an important unifying function. It is the central place, "the den/Of villany" (III.vii.273-274). Here the crucial actions take

place whose effects spill into the outside world. The rhythm of the play alternates three sequences of bedroom scenes with three sequences of other scenes, so that the bedroom "frames" the whole in time.

Mosca and Volpone's control of the situation and their ability to manipulate the motions of other characters break down in Act III. There is a series of accidents and intrusions. The bedroom is a kind of trap Volpone and Mosca have set for others, but they find themselves caught by it. Its confining structure works against them.

Volpone first finds himself trapped in his own device when an unwelcome guest forces herself on his attention. He is made the captive and unwilling audience of two forms of display: the display of what Lady Would-Be regards as the elegance of her attire and the display of what she regards as her wit and depth of learning.

Throughout the Jonson canon, extravagant clothes serve as an outward manifestation of vanity, and the very richness of costume the script of Volpone requires may be taken as a commentary on the nature of the world therein created. The vanity of fashions is given its most direct presentation in III.iv., when Lady Would-Be pays her call on Volpone. She preens and adjusts herself even as she enters. She is a vain perfectionist, and the tiniest flaw in her appearance annoys her. She calls in her waiting women to berate them because a single hair is out of place.

While she is obsessed with her narcissistic sensitivity to appearance, Volpone momentarily resembles Morose of The Silent Woman in his painfully acute sensitivity to sound. Lady Would-Be's insistent chatter abrades him. While she is drawn to him, he is repelled by her, but he cannot escape. His own scheme of deception binds him to his bed like a torture rack. The scene's tension is produced by a "magnetic" polarity: he is repelled by what he attracts. Since Volpone is a fixed center, he must try to repell Lady Would-Be. His polite efforts to get her to leave or shut up are brushed aside until he is brought to such a pitch of pain that he exclaims in groans similar to those he feigned in Act I. His pretence verges on reality: "Before I fayn'd diseases, now I have one" (III.iv.62).

Mosca must rescue him. Mosca's function as an usher to bring people in and out of Volpone's bedroom becomes more critical at this point. First he gets rid of Lady Would-Be with a lie; then he brings in Bonario and conceals him where Mosca plans for him to hear his father disown him. At that moment Corvino arrives with Celia; they have come at Mosca's instigation, of course, but not according to his time-table. Instead of the neat, separate, regular entrances of Act I, Mosca must suddenly contend with a disorderly rush, a convergence on the magnetic center which promises a disruptive collision. Worse, Volpone does not even know Bonario is present; Mosca's over-confidence in his independent initiative has muddled everything. He must do a quick shuffle. He sends

Bonario off to wait where he hopes Bonario will not hear what is happening in the bedchamber.

Unlike all the other characters who approach the magnetic center of Volpone's bed in the course of the play, Celia is brought unwillingly. Her character is thus distinguished from those susceptible to Volpone's sinister influence. Where others have been attracted, she must be compelled against her strong aversion: this reversal of polarity creates the scene's tension. She is kept forcibly at a place she wants to leave. She has even been made to dress extravagantly, contrary to her nature, for this visit to the sight of opulence. Her superficial resemblence in attire to Lady Would-Be only calls attention to the great contrast between the reticence of one and the forwardness of the other.

Volpone's bed suddenly acquires a double meaning: throughout the play it has served as sickbed for Volpone's masquerade; now it becomes the voluptuary's couch. Through the bed, lust is associated with sickness, and never is Volpone's moral disease more evident than when he leaps from his bed like a wolf shedding sheep's clothing to attempt the seduction, or failing that, the rape of Celia.

Volpone's attempted seduction of Celia illustrates how Jonson combines speech with the visual aspect of a scene. In a series of sensuous hyperboles, Volpone promises Celia a splendor which exaggerates the opulence of the setting and its hedonistic potential:

> See, here, a rope of pearle; and each, more orient
> Then that the braue Aegyptian queene carrous,d:
> . . . .
> The heads of parrats, tongues of nightingales,
> The braines of peacoks, and of estriches
> Shall be our food:
> . . . .
> Thy bathes shall be the iuyce of iuly-flowres,
> Spirit of roses, and of violets,
> The milk of unicorns, and panthers breath
> Gather'd in bagges, and mixt with cretan wines.
> Our drinke shall be prepared gold, and amber;
> Which we will take, vntill my roofe whirle round
> With the vertigo. . . . (III.vii.191-219)

Celia responds by wishing her beauty rather than her virtue destroyed. Her suggestions contrast as violently with the visible reality as Volpone's did:

> . . .flay my face,
> Or poison it, with oyntments, for seducing
> Your bloud to this rebellion. Rub these hands,
> With what may cause an eating leprosie,
> E'ene to my bones, and marrow: any thing,
> That may disfauor me, saue in my honour. (III.vii.252-57)

Volpone's imaginings exceed the bounds of the possible; his seizure of Celia exceeds the bounds of moral law. Two forms of over-reaching are joined in this scene, and Volpone tumbles from his height. Bonario unexpectedly rescues Celia, and Volpone and Mosca are thrown into consternation. Mosca's confusion and despair when faced with this crisis belie the boasts he made at the start of the act; his efforts to save the situation are motivated not by exuberance, but by desperation.

VI. Act Four: The Trial

The first half of Act IV is devoted to the Would-Be subplot, which is not really a plot at all, but a series of caricatures. The comic display of the two "humour" characters, Sir Politic Would-Be and his wife, is the only real interest in these scenes. These characters never clash with anyone except through some contrived pretext based on misunderstanding or trickery. They are never parties to a serious conflict over any substantive issue. Their errors expose their pretensions and folly, and their scenes are not much deeper than that.

But the Would-Be couple illustrate one of the play's major themes: the discrepancy between appearance and truth. Both pretend to be what they are not. Lady Would-Be puts on an outward show of attempted fashion which is ludicruous in its extravagance. She prides herself on her perspicacity, yet commits comic blunders of mistaken identification, such as taking Peregrine for a young woman in disguise. Her husband, Sir Politic, prides himself on the superior penetration of his insight, yet he is fooled by the most transparent ploys. Both the Would-Be's, moreover, take pride in a chameleon-like ability they do not really possess to adapt themselves to the native forms and fashions. Their mistake is a misapprehension both of themselves and of the world around them.

All the vivid visual spectacle of Volpone is related to this serious theme which the Would-Be subplot exploits

comically: the inherent falsity of the spectacular. The sumptuous atmosphere of decadent luxury created by the play puts the world on trial. The play exaggerates the discrepancy between outward show and inner worth as found in everyday life, and so inculcates by its own mighty appeal to the eye the moral lesson that the eye cannot be trusted. Seeing is not believing, particularly when the sight is dazzled.

After the relaxation of tension occasioned by the Would-Be buffoonery, the action of the play moves rapidly to a climax in the impressive setting of the Venetian court of justice. The court ought to be a place for the ultimate discovery of truth through the penetration of appearances, but that purpose is belied by the court's own pomp and ceremony. The court is a public spectacle in which illusions can flourish.

The pageantry and formality which are such an important part of Volpone's theatrical "mix" here reach their height, appropriate to the gravity of a moment when moral depravity reaches its lowest depth. Hitherto, wicked deceptions have been practised on wicked deceivers; now the wicked combine their forces to arraign the innocent before the moral authority of the state, in the process arraigning themselves before the moral judgment of the audience. The gravity of the court is ironic, for even the justices are on trial.

Throughout theatrical history, trial scenes have been a frequent device for providing suspense and spectacle. They naturally should, since even a real trial is a species of

theatre. Paradoxically, what is formal and ceremonious in real life is all the more convincing in its reality onstage, because the mind has been conditioned already to accept it, to expect its "staged" quality. Like a double negative, staged staging cancels itself out, leaving what seems real.

But the theatricality of this trial is compounded by the suborning of the witnesses beforehand. Not only are the forms of the court foreordained; so is the testimony. The theatre of the court is manipulated by behind-the-scenes stage managing.

The brief scene in which the perjurers conspire before the trial makes use of the magnetic center construction in an interesting way. Mosca, as organizer and orchestrator of the collective position, is the magnetic center; he has drawn together the parties, each with his separate interest in the affair. At the same time, he must keep them apart. He assures each one that the others are being duped on his behalf; each is convinced that he alone is in on the secret. The ensemble onstage never really becomes a group; thanks to Mosca's divisive diplomacy, they remain an aggregate of separate individuals. Mosca seems to exercise a double force, attracting on the one hand and dispersing on the other. His ability to attract and hold in line each perjurer separately enables him to keep them from getting together to compare notes. This is a role he fulfills throughout the play, but it is most evident here where he assembles all his dupes together at once.

The trial is preceded by the entrance of the court in formal procession. The procession is doubtlessly a colorful event, with the parade of the Avocatori in their robes and the Commendatori in their uniforms. The stage is filled, since most of the characters in the play are either present or enter in the course of the scene.

The basic structure of the scene follows the magnetic center formula. It must, since that is the arrangement of a real court of law, where the witnesses appear one at a time before a judge who remains in the dominant, central position. Here, the four Avocatori occupy the central position to which each speaker or witness before the court must present and address himself. The four Avocatori serve not merely as on-stage spectators towards whom the performances of the other characters must be directed, but also as an audience which must be persuaded or convinced. The characters present themselves to the Avocatori basically one at a time, repeating in essence the structure of Act I, when Volpone lay in bed and the three suitors of his fortune came to call one after the other. There is slight interaction among the witnesses except to point at each other as evidence or to exchange accusations. For the most part, they passively await their turns.

Voltore, the lawyer, is the main speaker before the court. Most of his speeches are not dialogue; they are part of a single oration which is broken by various interruptions. His oratorical position is not so dominating as Volpone's was in

II.iii., and his intent is to shape the judges' perceptions of others rather than to call attention to himself as did Volpone-Scoto.

Volpone's speech was not specifically directed, but radiated outward to the general audience. Voltore's speech, on the other hand, is specifically directed at the judges. The judges, while they are the center of attention of the characters on stage, are not the center of attention for the audience in the theatre. Their relative passivity allows the main focus of attention to rest on the speakers before the court and shift to other characters at need. Voltore, in the course of his speech, directs the attention now towards one, now towards another of the other characters. Moreover, he is interrupted by those other characters who make, or try to make, their own impressions on the court.

Voltore constantly calls attention to the visual in his effort to promote his particular interpretation of appearances. He explains away Celia's innocent demeanor:

> This lewd woman
> . . .wants no artificiall lookes, or teares,
> To helpe the visor, she has now put on. . . . (IV.v.34-36)

Volpone's entrance, when he is carried in in a state of feigned paralysis, clinches Voltore's case at the climax of the oration:

> do you not think,
> These limbes should affect venery? or these eyes
> Couet a concubine? 'pray you, marke these hands.
> Are they not fit to stroake a ladies brests?
> Perhaps, he doth dissemble? (IV.vi.25-29)

The power of speech to alter appearances and the unscrupulousness of Voltore in misusing that power are satirized here, along with the gullibility of the judges. Voltore's use of the visual as an element of persuasion illustrates how Jonson uses spectacle purposefully. Ostentation is generally a cover for the inferior or ordinary, and spectacle itself smacks of falsity and deception or at best superficiality. Jonson uses spectacle to attract attention to the limits of spectacle, to instruct the spectator in penetrating the outward show to the inner truth. Spectacle can conceal or reveal truth, but is always distinct from it.

VII. Act Five: A Finish With Finesse

Act V of Volpone returns for its major locations to the two most magnificent settings in the play: the opulent, luxurious setting of Volpone's bedroom and the impressive, formal setting of the Venetian scrutineo. The last act, through the repetition of settings, recapitulates the movement of the whole play from the rear stage to the outer stage, from the private domain to the public.

The predominant magnetic center for the first three acts is Volpone. Most of the scenes in those acts revolve about Volpone in his sickbed or Volpone on the mountebank platform. During acts IV and V, the preponderant weight of the action shifts, and the court becomes the dominant magnetic center.

The shift of the magnetic center from Volpone to the court coincides with a shift in power in the same direction. At the beginning of the play, Volpone manipulates the behavior of others. In the third act, he attempts to exercise that power, but loses control. In Act IV, the court begins to exercise its power, and Volpone and Mosca must manuveur to oppose it. Finally, in Act V, the power of the court overwhelms all who conspired to deceive it.

The beginning of Act V finds Volpone and Mosca safely returned home, re-established in their sanctuary and stronghold. The resolution of Act IV has left them approximately where they were before Volpone's deviation in pursuit of Celia complicated

their original scheme. Volpone and Mosca turn their attention back to the comparatively simple business they pursued in Act I, the deception of the greedy legacy-hunters.

Volpone's ultimate loss of power is foreshadowed when he voluntarily relinquishes the post of magnetic center to Mosca. Volpone sends abroad the rumor that he has died; this scheme is designed to carry out to its logical conclusion the "Fox Who Feigned Death" motif and to put a climactic period to the false hopes of the legacy-hunters. When the dupes flock to claim their shares of fortune, they find Mosca in possession as sole heir, contemptuous of their expectations. The fly has gotten to the corpse first.

Mosca, then, takes the place of Volpone as handler of the fortune and as magnetic center of the subsequent scene (V.iii). The fortune confers the power of attraction. All the dupes --Voltore, Corbacchio, Corvino, and Lady Would-Be--quickly come in one after another in the order in which they first appeared in the play and find Mosca taking inventory. Once more Jonson builds his scene on the principle of attraction and repulsion. Each of the dupes tries to attract Mosca's attention and to get him to confirm his former promises to them, but he ignores them and remains buried in his busy counting except when he surfaces to make some terse, curt remark.

Even after seeing the will which names Mosca heir, each of the four dupes persists in thinking that it may be merely a device to fool the others. They are unable to give up their

hopes. Each clings to the hope that at least some share will fall to his lot. Each adheres to the magnetic center until forcibly thrust away. They all ask for explanation, but Mosca repels them one at a time with harsh words and drives them out with insults.

The scene not only completes the train of events initiated in Act I in a way fairly independent of what has come between, but does so with a certain pleasing symmetry. The two sequences have a similar structure. The repetitious entrances and exits of Act I are repeated in Act V with a faster pace.

In jest, Mosca has replaced Volpone as master of the house and fortune. But there is such a thin line between appearance and reality that Mosca's masquerade prepares the audience for his decision to assume Volpone's place in earnest. When Volpone, who is presumed dead, is lured outside in a disguise, Mosca locks him out of the house, cutting him off from his vital connection with his gold and with his sanctuary. Volpone, after a fashion, loses his identity, and his disguise emphasizes that point. It is the first disguise he has worn chosen not by himself but by another, and it is the first disguise he has worn which has not been designed for its impact, but to make him look ordinary and anonymous. He is dressed in the uniform of a commendatore, and so becomes a member of a group, identical with them in appearance. Ironically, it is the commendatori who lead people before the court and who will lead Volpone to prison.

In the play's final scenes, the court is the only stable force left. It commands the center of the stage while a series of sudden reversals and double reversals unravels before it. Voltore confesses his part in deceiving the court, then withdraws his confession. Mosca denies Volpone to his face. Volpone is put in the awkward position of having to affirm his survival while concealing his identity. Everything seems confused, unstable, and volatile. As an Avocatore says, "These things can nere be reconcil'd" (V.xii.1).

Volpone is forced to reveal himself to keep from being consigned to oblivion, left in a false identity while declared legally dead. In doing so, he exposes Mosca and all the perjurers. The court then re-asserts its authority and establishes order. The power to control entrances and exits has long since passed to the court, as it has commanded now this character, now that to be brought before it. Now the court passes judgment one by one on the principles, sentences each, and declares to them their ultimate destinations.

The general function of the final court scene is to bring together all the characters, expose all deceptions, resolve all conflicts, and tie up the plot's loose ends. The trial device assembles the entire cast on stage, ready to take their bows. Fittingly, Volpone receives one last opportunity to stand as magnetic center; with the cast stationed behind him he steps forward to ask the audience for applause.

VIII. Conclusion

Jonson's spectacle, while well designed for immediate theatrical appeal, is not an end in itself. It is subordinate to meaning. The scenes which pass before the audience signify more than the actions they represent. One of Jonson's favorite devices is to make his characters, while doing one thing, unconsciously mimic something else, and the correspondence between what they are doing and what they are "accidently" imitating usually has symbolic meaning. The intrigue that resembles a beast fable, the celebration of wealth which resembles a church sacrament, and the practical joke that resembles an emblem are all instances in which the characters literally know not what they do: which implies comment on what they think they are doing. Sometimes the characters will imitate their own past actions or foreshadow their future ones, producing associations between scenes on another plane besides linear plot connection.

Frequently scenes are associated by the similarities of their inner forms, patterns of movement, and visual organization, as well as by the more overt cross-reference of similar sensuous exteriors or similar symbolic emphasis. The device of the magnetic center, effective in controlling stage movements and manipulating the attention of the audience, also binds scenes together through their internal similarities. Thus, the magnetic center device is an important means of providing cohesion for the whole.

NOTES

I. Introduction: The Magnetic Center

1 John Dryden, "An Essay Of Dramatic Poesy," Literary Criticism of John Dryden, ed. Arthur C. Kirsch (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), p. 46.

2 Ben Jonson, Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52), Vol. V, p. 18.

3 Robert E. Knoll, Ben Jonson's Plays: An Introduction (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 99.

4 William A. Armstrong, "Ben Jonson and Jacobean Stagecraft," Jacobean Theatre, ed. John Russell Brown and Bernard Harris (New York: Capricorn Books, 1967), pp. 53-54.

5 Harry Levin, "An Introduction to Ben Jonson," Ben Jonson: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Jonas A. Barish (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 54.

6 Freda L. Townsend, Apologie for Bartholmew Fayre (New York: Modern Language Association, 1947), p. 58.

7 Wallace A. Bacon, "The Magnetic Field: The Structure of Jonson's Comedies," Huntingdon Literary Quarterly, 19 (1956), pp. 151-152.

[8] George R. Kernodle, From Art To Theatre (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 32.

II. The Living Emblem

[9] Una Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama: An Interpretation (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p. 114.

[10] George R. Ferguson, Signs & Symbols In Christian Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 55.

[11] Knoll, p. 100.

[12] D. A. Scheve, "Jonson's Volpone And Traditional Fox Lore," The Review of English Studies, New Series, 1 (1950), p. 242.

[13] John J. Enck, Jonson and the Comic Truth (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1957), p. 117.

[14] Ben Jonson, Ben Jonson, Vol. VII, p. 91.

III. Act One: The Microcosm

[15] Albert B. Kernan, "Introduction," Volpone (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 1.

[16] Knoll, p. 27.

[17] Henri Bergson, "Laughter," Comedy, ed. Wylie Sypher (Garden City: Doubleday, 1956), p. 84.

[18] Levin, p. 55.

IV. Scoto and the Window

[19] Ferguson, p. 16.

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